

### *Congressman Says Bill is Important First Step, Responds to Industry Critique of Disclosure Provisions*

Washington, DC - Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today hailed this week's introduction of legislation he co-authored, the Fracturing Responsibility and Awareness of Chemicals Act (FRAC Act), noting that passage of the bill would be an important first step in what he expects to be a prolonged effort to protect drinking water and the environment from the contamination risks of hydraulic fracturing - a process whereby millions of gallons of water, sand and cancer-causing chemicals are injected deep into the ground to blast apart rocks and release natural gas. The FRAC Act would require that chemicals used in the drilling process be publicly disclosed. It would also roll back an egregious provision of the 2005 Energy Policy Act, which exempted the drilling process from the Safe Drinking Water Act despite the congressman's objections.

"While the natural gas industry would like to pretend that the current regulatory framework is sufficient to protect the environment, drinking water and public health, scores of citizens throughout the country are telling a different story," said Hinchey. "We need to know exactly what chemicals are being injected into the ground and we must ensure that the industry is not exempt from basic environmental safeguards like the Safe Drinking Water Act. The FRAC Act is an important first step toward protecting people from the risks of hydraulic fracturing."

The reintroduction of the bill follows a series of alarming reports from The New York Times that detailed how water can be contaminated by not just chemicals used in the drilling process, but also through Naturally Occurring Radioactive Materials (NORMS) that are brought up during the drilling process and sent to wastewater treatment plants that cannot effectively remove these dangerous materials. The articles also detailed how the natural gas industry has tried to narrow the scope of an ongoing U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) study that was initiated in response to report language Hinchey authored. A separate investigation conducted by the U.S. House Energy and Commerce Committee also recently revealed that 32 million gallons of diesel fuel were used in wells drilled in 19 states despite industry claims to the contrary.

Following the introduction of the FRAC Act, America's Natural Gas Alliance (ANGA), a leading industry trade group, released a statement in opposition to the bill, noting that the industry has "stepped forward to support disclosure on a well-by-well basis on both public and private lands."

Hinchey responded noting that, "the industry tried to narrow the scope of the EPA study, they tried to cover up the fact that they were using diesel fuel, and they denied the contamination risks of radioactive wastewater. If they're willing to voluntarily disclose the chemicals they use, why should they fear a provision that requires them to do it? If they're so sure that their process is safe, what do they have to fear from being held accountable to the same rules that every other industry has to play by?"

Hinchey joined Representative Dianna DeGette (D-CO) in authoring and introducing the FRAC Act. Similar legislation was introduced in the previous Congress. Hinchey is also the author of language that initiated an ongoing EPA study to determine the environmental impacts of the drilling technique.